



NAME: CAPTAIN (CAPT) DAVID BANKS

JOB TITLE: CONSULTANT PHARMACIST

AGENCY: FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION
(FDA)

EDUCATION/DEGREES/CERTIFICATES/INSTITUTIONS :

In 1977 Captain David Banks earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Pharmacy from Butler University College of Pharmacy in Indianapolis, Indiana. While working for the Food and Drug Administration, he enrolled in graduate school to gain a better understanding of health policy. His hard work culminated in a Masters of Science in Policy Sciences and a Doctor of Philosophy in Public Policy from the University of Maryland.

CURRENT JOB DESCRIPTION:

CAPT Banks is a Pharmacist with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Office of Special Health Issues (OSHI), in Rockville, MD. OSHI facilitates the input of patients and patient advocates to influence regulatory decisions and shape FDA regulatory policy in the areas of HIV/AIDS, cancer, and other serious and life-threatening diseases (diabetes mellitus, Parkinson's disease, etc.). Other OSHI activities include acting as a conduit between patients and patient advocates and the FDA medical and regulatory staff, promptly answering questions regarding FDA programs related to serious and life-threatening diseases, helping to formulate policies in HIV/AIDS, cancer, and special populations (ethnic groups, pediatric population, and gender-specific issues), completing projects to broadly address FDA or patient information needs, and representing the FDA at scientific and policy meetings.

Patients can get involved in the regulatory decision-making process by participating in the FDA Patient Representative Program or the FDA Patient Consultant Program. Patient Representatives provide insights about the needs of patients with their disease to an FDA advisory committee reviewing a therapy (drug, biologic, or medical device) for which a regulatory action is pending. Similarly, patients with cancer, HIV, or Parkinson's disease can participate in the FDA Patient Consultant Program and advise FDA while a drug is under development. Patient advocates can also participate in Open Public Comment periods during FDA advisory committee meetings.

CAPT Banks stays busy with a wide variety of challenges. He interacts with government agencies and patient advocates, researches policy, organizes national meetings, provides regulatory assistance to patients, families, patient advocacy organizations, and health care providers, and acts as a preceptor, lecturer, and mentor for pharmacy students serving rotations at FDA. Numerous former students of CAPT Banks' have entered the USPHS.

QUALIFICATIONS :

Doctor of Philosophy, Public Policy (Health Policy) (2004)
Master of Arts, Policy Sciences (Health Policy) (1999)
Bachelor of Pharmacy (1977)

REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE USPHS AS A CAREER :

Early in his career, CAPT Banks perceived that many employers in pharmacy approached relationships with pharmacists on a short-term basis and did not value pharmacists' experience or time with that employer. That factor served as the basis for CAPT Banks to distinguish between employers offering a job and those offering a career. His desire to pursue the latter led him to his first assignment as a pharmacist with the Bureau of Prisons (BOP).

PREVIOUS USPHS ASSIGNMENTS:

In addition to the Bureau of Prisons, CAPT Banks has had five other assignments. In 1984 he was assigned to the Food and Drug Administration Division of Neuropharmacological Drug Products as a Consumer Safety Officer. After four years he took as position as a Senior Regulatory Review Officer with the FDA Division of Drug Marketing, Advertising, and Communications. CAPT Banks then moved to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) as a Consultant Pharmacist with the National Institute on Drug Abuse, Clinical Trials Branch. In 1993 he returned to the FDA to the Reports Evaluation Branch as a Postmarketing Safety Evaluator. Since 1996 he has been working at his current assignment.

MOST REWARDING USPHS PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

While CAPT Banks has found each of his USPHS assignments rewarding, working the past nine years in the Office of Special Health Issues has been the most gratifying experience of his career because of the special group of people he works with and his great interest in the work in that office.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS/ACTIVITIES :

The American Journal of Health-System Pharmacy (AJHP) published "Pharmacists, Pharmaceutical Manufacturers, and Conflicts of Interest" in September, 2005. In this commentary, CAPT Banks examined how the pharmaceutical industry is targeting pharmacists because of their growing therapeutic influence, and how this can lead to conflicts of interest (COIs). He stated that "a more thorough understanding of COIs and how to avoid them will help pharmacists meet their obligation to provide the best patient care". CAPT Banks also serves as a reviewer for AJHP.

SPECIAL NOTES OF INTEREST:

After Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast, CAPT Banks was deployed to Alexandria, Louisiana where he co-managed two shelters for evacuees with special medical needs. He has also volunteered at the local chapter of the Alzheimer's Association in the past, and is active in other civic organizations.

By LCDR Thomas E. Addison

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